are to be tackled seriously, sufficient funds should be allotted to the Police Department. The Police Department is always starved of funds. The police in India are working under miserable conditions. I share the responsibility, if at all it is on me. But it has been emphasised. I think Hon. Home Minister would appreciate that this component of the administration of the State requires special attention rather than being criticised.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I fully endorse what the hon. Member has just now said. He has had experience, in Government, of attending to these problems. Over the years, various recommendations have been made in respect of the police set-up in the country, including the well-known Dharmavir Commission's report. We have, since then, taken it up, revived it and referred it to a special Committee which has made its own recommendations. The courts also have taken cognizance of it. And various steps have been taken in pursuance of those recommendations. I would, certainly, agree and accept that for the sake of the country's internal security, for the sake of the citizens' security and for the sake of law and order in the country, the principal instrument is the police, the police administration, and, therefore, their needs of accommodation, their emoluments, their facilities and conditions of service need to be considerably improved. The Government is fully conscious of it and is alive to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

Afghan citizens living in the country

*42. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN:†
SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Afghan citizens living in the country;

(b) whether all Afghan individuals are registered, if not, the

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Satish Pradhan.

number of such Afghans who are not registered and since when they are living in India; and

(c) the action being taken by Union Government to push out such unregistered Afghans from India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) As on 30.6.2001, there were 19254 Afghan nationals living in India who are also registered.

The Afghan nationals have been coming to India since the outbreak of disturbances in Afghanistan in early 1980s. All Afghan nationals are required to register themselves within 7 days of their arrivals in the country. However, some Afghan nationals came without passports/travel documents and did not get themselves registered.

The Government has recently liberalized the registration policy for Afghan nationals to encourage even those of them, who are still unregistered, to get themselves registered with the authorities.

(c) Due to continuing ethnic and other disturbances in Afghanistan, it is not considered feasible to push out unregistered Afghan nationals back to their country, particularly as a majority of them belong to Hindu-Sikh community. Further, the suspension of commercial flights to Afghanistan and absence of any other mode of travel has made it physically impossible to deport Afghan nationals.

श्री सतीश प्रधान: सभापति जी, आदरणीय मंत्री ने अभी बताया है कि हिन्दुस्तान में 30 जून, 2001 में 19254 अफगान नेशनल्स रहते हैं जबकि दूसरे सदन में 14 अगस्त, 2000 को स्टार क्वेश्चन नम्बर 336 का जवाब देते समय बताया गया था कि 31.12.2000 को टोटल 19761 अफगान नेशनल्स हिन्दुस्तान में रहते हैं। इस संबंध में जो फीगर्स दिए जा रहे हैं, ये मेरी समझ में नहीं आ रहे हैं, क्या कुछ लोग चले गए हैं या उनका क्या हुआ? यदि मंत्री जी इस संबंध में प्रकाश डालेंगे तो मैं उनका अति आभारी रहूंगा।

SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO: Most of the Afghan nationals who are staying here have got registered with the authorities. But some of them would not renew their registration.

Because of that, there is always a variation about the number registered and their exact number.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Sir, if some Afghan nationals have come here, and once they have registered themselves here, they have to renew their registration. If they have not renewed their registration, then what is going to happen to them? You must have the machinery to monitor this thing, and you must have the up to date record. Whatever information you are supplying now to the House, if something which cannot be imagined or understood. Kindly clarify this point.

SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO: Sir, they are supposed to continue these renewals before the FROs. But out of 19254 Afghanis, most of them are with valid documents, visas and passports. Out of the 19254 Afghan nationals, only 7,244 have renewed their registration with the FROs. This is because of the fact that they are facing so many problems with regard to getting their passports, and they are finding it difficult to renew their registration. As per the law, they are liable to be deported back to their country if they have not renewed their registration. But we are not deporting them because there is no communication, and because of the pathetic conditions which are prevailing in Afghanistan. Moreover, they are very poor. Taking all these things into consideration, the Government has granted certain facilities to them. As far as the report is concerned, after about 12,000 people having come, we gave certain relaxations to them. Firstly, an opportunity is given to all Afghan nationals to register themselves with the concerned FROs with valid travel documents, till 31.12.2001. Secondly, those who are not having any travel documents, will be considered after identification for issue of the identity certificates. Thirdly, extension of stay in India is being given on yearly basis, instead of six-monthly basis, as was done earlier. Fourthly, the registered Afghan nationals can move in India without special restrictions. Only those restrictions applicable to the other foreigners, will be applicable to the Afghans. Fifthly, the overstay fee has been waived for the renewal of registration as well as exit from this country. Sixthly, multi-entries are being given to those Afghans, who have business outside India, to facilitate their transfer.

without any hazard. Seventhly, those Afghans who would like to visit other countries for the purpose of tourism, are being considered for the single entry facility. These relaxations are being given by virtue of an order of 30.9.2001 to facilitate them to go to other countries or to get themselves registered. Even the fee is also being waived. All concessions are being given to them to encourage them to get the registration renewed.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Though I am not satisfied with his answer, I am putting my second supplementary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. you have already put your second supplementary. You have already intervened.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Sir, I intervened because I was not satisfied with his answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have intervened twice. Now, Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Sir. this is a question of national security.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I agree with you.

SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: If you do not allow me to raise my second supplementary, it is okay.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Thank you very much, Sir. Sir, the answer to part (c) of the question is quite satisfactory. As far as part (b) of the question is concerned, I would like to know the number of such Afghans who are not registered, and since when they are living in India. The answer given by the hon. Minister is not specific. I thank the hon. Minister for liberalizing the registration policy for the Afghan nationals. I would like to know the total number of Afghan nationals who came without travel documents. How many of them have got themselves registered? I would also like to know the number of Afghan nationals who are still not registered. If actual figures are not available, the estimated figures can be given. Secondly, I would like to know whether some Afghan nationals have applied for the Indian citizenship. If so, how many of them have been granted Indian citizenship?

SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO: Sir, I am giving the accurate figures. As on 30.6.2001, the total number of Afghan nationals was 19254. Out of them—because they are supposed to register themselves immediately, after six months, again renew their registration with the FRO—only, 7,244 Afghans renewed their registration; 12,000 Afghans are yet to renew their registration. We have given a number of facilities to them, and they are being encouraged. Now, gradually, they are coming to the Foreigners Registration Office and getting themselves registered.

The answer to the second supplementary is, that there are about 2,000—it is estimated-unregistered Afghans living in our country. It is our information. For them also, we have provided opportunity. They need not consider themselves as illegal Afghans. They can also come to the Foreigners Registration Office and get themselves registered. This is the latest figure.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: What about giving them Indian citizenship?

SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO: Sir, I need a fresh notice. That can be considered as per the rules.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, there is a great deal of confusion, as pointed out by my colleague, about the actual number of Afghan refugees in this country. I would like to point out, in this context, that whilst the Minister says here that it is 19,254, the registered number in the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in Delhi is 12,500. Now, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees is the coordinating agency all over the world and, like all other countries, it is also recognised by India, but there does not seem to be any coordination between the UNHCR Office in Delhi and the Government of India in regard to the figures. I must also mention that when this Government came to power, the earlier practice of recognising the certificates issued by the UNHCR Office in Delhi for the purpose of registration of Afghan refugees was stopped, and that has created a lot of problems since 1998. So, my question is: What is, as per this Government, the status of the UNHCR? It has got diplomatic status all over the world. What

These challenges were met by better vigilance at places wherever women used to gather and also by issuing leaflets. Ultimately, they have succeeded. This movement which was started in 1990 has completely fizzled out. There is no sign of such a movement.

SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: I would like to know whether compulsory covering of face is not an attack on women's right to dress. What steps has the Government taken to ensure that women have freedom and right to dress as they want and are not cowed down by the dress code imposed by the militants and the religious groups?

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: Sir, I have already answered that putting up of bindi, wearing a dupatta of a particular colour and wearing a burqa, all these things were started. But this campaign did not spread and did not catch the imagination of the people. The people condemned it. They denounced it. The Government of Jammu and Kashmir also started propaganda, which received a very good response from the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Ultimately, the movement has fizzled out. The people know about it. Now there is no danger or apprehension of this sort of invasion or this sort of terrorism spreading in Jammu and Kashmir at all.

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Sir, as compared to 1996-97 and 1997-98, suddenly there is an increase in violence in Jammu and Kashmir. Does the hon. Minister agree with it? If the violence has increased, what is the reason? I would like to know whether the Central Government has taken into confidence the Government of Jammu and Kashmir for dealing with these types of things. Apart from putting pressure from this side, what kind of social contacts has the Central Government tried to establish so far? When elections were conducted, there was 58 per cent polling and not a single incident of violence was reported. Why is there such a change? What is the reason?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): Sir, militancy and terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir has been there for over a decade. There have been ups and downs. But it seems that ever since the change of Government in 1999 in our neighbouring

country, there has been a concentrated effort on the part of the new Government to promote terrorism and these incidents. It is this which has led to it. Then came the Kargil war. The Kargil defeat also encouraged them further to pursue the same direction. But, gradually, we have succeeded in mobilising international opinion all over the world and containing militancy on the ground. Lately, the 11th September incidents of New York and Washington have completely convinced the world that what India was saying for all these years is correct.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the context of militant activities in Jammu and Kashmir, certainly, there has been a spurt recently, and we have to be very cautious. But I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Home Minister to a statement in today's newspapers on behalf of Hizbul Mujahideen. It is a very interesting statement. The Hizbul Mujahideen has stated (a) that the foreign terrorists should really not have any political role in Jammu and Kashmir and (b) that they are going to float a political party and that they are prepared for talks. Now, I am aware that, last year, we did make an effort. We had the Ramzan ceasefire, which was subsequently extended; of course, this did not yield any favourable result. Would the Home Minister be good enough to tell the House, in the light of the post-Taliban, now, situation, whether there is an opening for some creative dialogue at any level, whether it is with the Huriyat—obviously, the National Conference is in power there, and one has to talk with them—or, as you did last time, with some representatives of Hizbul and other militant organisations? I would like to know whether the Government is prepared to respond appropriately to such an opening, because it does seem to me from my experience of this whole situation, that the possibility of a new political opening within the next few weeks is there. And, if such a possibility arises, will the Government respond positively to it?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: The hon. Member, who belongs to Jammu and Kashmir, has drawn attention to a statement made by Hizbul Mujahideen. I will certainly look at it and examine it. I would like to emphasise that one of the essential components of the Government's approach to the problems of Jammu and Kashmir is the willingness to

इंडियन एक्सप्रेस में तालिबान समर्थक और पाकिस्तान समर्थक आतंकवादियों का बयान आया है कि उनका निशाना कश्मीर नहीं है बल्कि उनका निशाना दिल्ली है। दिल्ली में जो शरणार्थी आज रह रहे हैं उनको भी टारगेट कर सकते हैं कि वे यहां पर इस व्यवस्था में रह रहे हैं क्योंकि वे तालिबान के विरोध में यहां पर आए थे। उसके साथ-साथ सिख और हिंदू कम्युनिटी के बहुत सारे लोग जो अफगानिस्तान को इस हालात में छोड़कर पाकिस्तान में आकर रुके हुए हैं उनके पास प्रापर डाक्यूमेंट्स नहीं हैं। भारत में प्रवेश नहीं कर पा रहे हैं। उनको भारत में लाने के लिए और उनकी सुरक्षा व्यवस्था के लिए क्या कोई उपाय ढूंढे जा रहे हैं?

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी: माननीय सदस्य ने कुछ बातों की ओर ध्यान दिलाया है, उनकी छानबीन करके आवश्यक कार्यवाही की जाएगी।

Terror unleashed by militant outfits in J and K

*43. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:†
SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the recent reign of terror unleashed by militant outfits in Jammu and Kashmir to enforce their dictates such as those requiring wearing of veils (burqas) by Muslim women, separate seats for males and females in buses, wearing of bindis by Hindu women and wearing of yellow dupattas by Sikh women;

(b) if so, whether the militants throw acid on the faces of women not observing these dictates; and

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction to this sort of cultural invasion and fundamentalism perpetrated by the militants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) According to the available information, a lesser known

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Yadlapati Venkat Rao.